

TOWN OF CHATHAM
488 State Route 295
Chatham, New York 12037

TOWN BOARD MEETING MINUTES
(meeting held virtually)
April 16, 2020
6:30 PM

PRESENT

Supervisor Donal Collins, Councilmembers Vance Pitkin, Abi Mesick, John Wapner, Kevin Weldon, Recreation Director Mike West, CAATS Tammy Shaw, Town Clerk Beth Anne Rippel, Town Attorney Tal Rappleyea

Supervisor Collins called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and followed with the pledge to the flag.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Carol Moore Re: Virtual meetings
2. Gayla Cirone Re: 5G health concerns

REPORTS:

1. Assessor – no report
2. Code Enforcement/Building Inspector- report on file
3. Dog Control – report on file
4. Environmental Management Council –no report
5. Finance Department - report on file
6. Highway Department- report on file
7. Justice Court- report on file
8. Office of the Aging Advisory Board – no report
9. Recreation Director- report on file
10. Supervisor's Report- report on file
11. Town Clerk-report on file

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Report by Councilman Wapner and Councilman Weldon: Parks & Recreation Committee.

2. Report by Supervisor Collins: Citizens Finance & Planning Committee. Collins reported that the committee met virtually they are looking over the budget. Looking at the pavilion project and Albany Turnpike Bridge and where to go from here.
3. Report by Councilman Weldon: Climate Smart/Action Task Force Committee. Weldon said that for the last two years people have been able to use the charging station for free. Time's up so they've been discussing with Sarah Denadio setting rates for using the station. In general the recommendation is to set the rate at what the average gallon of gas would cost.
4. Report by Councilwoman Mesick: Communications Committee. There is not much happening right now. Michelle Munson may be interested in the co-chair position on the Committee.
5. Report by Councilwoman Mesick: Comprehensive Plan Update Review Committee. Nothing new.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Crellin Park – Wapner said that they haven't met as a committee so he advised his committee members to tune in to tonight's meeting. He wants everyone to be on the same page and is asking what to do about closing the pavilion project. In order to close the project we still have to do the concrete work for safety reasons. We'll move forward with the rest of the project once things are back on track within NYS. There is one sticking point right now Collins added and CEO, Kent Pratt, along with Wallace Architecture and Highway Super Joe Rickert have been working out technical issues with the structure Pratt will continue to keep an eye on the project and make sure everything is done to code while following NYS Pause guidelines pertaining to construction. Wapner is not confident that the summer camp program will go on in early July. Wapner asked "what will we have at the Park" then? We may have to do more waiting, the swimming program and Children's Garden will also be affected. Wapner said that West hasn't begun to think about the logistics. Wapner said that the Chatham Central School District Superintendent Sal DiAngelo expects the schools to be closed for the remainder of the school year. They're looking at reopening in September.

Wapner wants to get feedback from Rec. Director, Mike West and from the public before making the decision to close summer camp.

Weldon said he's not ready to make the decision yet. He said he didn't see this resolution until 5:30 and neither did the public.

West said that it's not looking great and he'd like to recommend holding off on the decision as long as possible. This will affect a lot of people. Everyone seems to be waiting to hear from the State. West wants to give parents as much notice as possible if they need to make alternate plans for the summer. Collins asked West to get an email out asap to the camp parents to get a feel for what they think about the summer program and the possibility of closing.

3.STR Properties

Mesick wants to bring to the Board and hopefully passing the proposed resolution that strongly advising STR owners to be allowed to not look for new renters until after May 15. This is to discourage people from traveling and moving in and out of the County and to shelter in-place. Such a resolution may offer STR owners more support in turning down possible guests. It's not that they don't want to

rent but at this time the town in which they reside in has strongly suggested that for the time being that they don't continue to rent.

Weldon asked if there something on their platform that says that they have to rent? Has anyone inquired about it? Mesick said that she's not an expert on this but in some instances the owners can be penalized for not renting. We are trying to encourage people to stay where they are. Weldon says that this is murky water. We don't currently have anything on our books relating to STR in the Towns zoning code now so we can't make a ruling on what STR do at this point. We've discussed STRs but we've discussed a lot of things that are illegal in this town. Mesick doesn't want to argue about whether STR area permitted uses or not. The point is not to discuss the legal standing but acknowledge the fact that they exist. If there is an awareness of the spread of the virus and that the Governor has asked us to shelter in place then perhaps people will put off visiting until after it is clear to do so. There is no reason to turn this into a zoning issue.

Wapner sees two issues: keeping people from going in and out of Chatham unnecessarily and also the issue that was mentioned that property owners make their spaces available to emergency workers who might need lodging. The zoning issue is relevant and the way to get at this as a community and the public is to have some kind of a statement to encourage all property owners make their space available to emergency workers and limit the number of guests coming into their homes from out of the area. It's much broader and you get at the intent and you don't raise the issue of STRs. Make it broader by including all property owners. Wapner is in favor of this but not in favor of this being directed just at STRs. Weldon agrees Wapner says it's a better way to approach the subject. to make it broader.

A spirited discussion continues on the resolution.....

Pitkin asked if the Board has the authority to restrict people from moving around to which Rappleyea said that the Board does not. Local recommendations should fit "hand in glove" with the State recommendations. We want to limit the amount of travel, try to keep beds open for emergency workers if they're needed. Wapner doesn't think they should single out one group, there has been no public comment on this subject. Collins asked Rappleyea if by using the word "STR" makes this a stronger resolution, Rappleyea replied "yes". Wapner told Rappleyea that he was not interested in his opinion; it is not a legal opinion. There isn't going to be a vote tonight, residents had no idea that this resolution was going to be raised. Mesick said the resolution is about keeping people safe.

RESOLUTIONS:

1.Resolution 83-2020: To accept the Town Accountant's Financial Supervisor's Report.

Offered by Weldon, seconded by Wapner.

VOTE

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Wapner, Weldon NAY: None Resolution adopted.

2.Resolution 84-2020: To accept the Financial Abstract as presented to pay the Town bills.

Offered by Weldon, seconded by Wapner.

VOTE

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Wapner, Weldon NAY: None Resolution adopted.

3. Resolution 85-2020: To approve minutes of Town Board Meetings- March 5, 2020, March 30, 2020 and April 2, 2020 as written. Offered by Pitkin, seconded by Collins.

VOTE

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Wapner, Weldon NAY: None Resolution adopted.

4. Resolution 86-2020: To appoint Dog Control Officer.

WHEREAS, the Part-time Dog Control Officer position become vacant effective April 1, 2020 and has resulted in the need to fill the position, and WHEREAS, the position was advertised and interviews for said position took place on April 15, 2020, and THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Chatham Town Board appoints Darrell Dutcher, effective April 17, 2020, as the Part-time Dog Control Officer, at an annual salary of \$ 3723.00.

Offered by Mesick, seconded by Wapner.

VOTE

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Wapner, Weldon NAY: None Resolution adopted.

5. Resolution 87-2020: To encourage STR properties to limit all non-essential rentals.

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham, as well as the State of New York and the entire nation are faced with the COVID 19 pandemic; and WHEREAS, Governor of the State of New York and all health officials have requested that all people remain at home as much as possible and to eliminate all unnecessary travel in order to slow the spread of the virus, and WHEREAS, the makes the following resolution to protect the public health, safety and welfare. NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Chatham strongly encourages owners of all properties in the Town of Chatham including short-term rentals, B&Bs and inns to limit all non-essential rentals until further notice in order to 1) help slow the spread of the virus and 2) keep such properties open for emergency/medical personnel in the event same are needed to help treat those who may be infected; and be it further RESOLVED that the Town Board will periodically review and reconsider the within resolution, including upon the expiration of the State of New York's Executive Order concerning the pause relating to the COVID 19 virus.

Motion to table was made by Collins and seconded by Weldon. Motion carried

6. Resolution #88-2020 To Cancel the 2020 Recreation Program

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham offers a six-week summer camp program for children at Crellin Park under the direction of the Recreation Department, and WHEREAS, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and precautions needing to be followed for the health and welfare of our community, and THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chatham Town Board has determined that the 2020 Summer Camp Program shall be cancelled.

Motion to table was made by Pitkin and seconded by Weldon. Motion carried.

CONDUCT ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT COMES BEFORE THE TOWN BOARD

Supervisor Collins thanked everyone who is making masks and wanted to announce that he will be distributing hand sanitizer again at the town hall on Sunday afternoon.

On a motion by Mesick, second by Wapner and carried the meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Beth Anne Rippel, Town Clerk